

AIR WAR COLLEGE

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**THROW AWAY THE BOX: RETHINKING LOGISTICS
INTEGRATION BETWEEN SPECIAL OPERATIONS AND
GENERAL PURPOSE FORCES**

by

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Biography

Colonel Dennis H. Levesque is assigned to the Air War College, Air University, Maxwell AFB, AL. Colonel Dennis H. Levesque received a ROTC commission in the Quartermaster (QM) Corps and a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Management degree from Providence College (Providence, RI) in 1993. Upon graduation, he completed the Airborne course at Ft Benning, GA and later became a Jumpmaster. He has held a wide variety of leadership assignments throughout his 22 year career including: Platoon Leader, Intelligence, and Operations Officer in 1st Infantry Division (ID) (Mechanized) Ft Riley, KS; Assistant Brigade (BDE) Logistics Officer for the 1st BDE, 1st ID; Commander 109th QM Company; Following command, he participated in the Sun Oil Company Training with Industry program in Philadelphia, PA which led to a tour in Okinawa, Japan as the Battalion Operations Officer, Petroleum Operations Officer, and Executive Officer for the 505th QM BN; Directorate of Logistics Supply & Services Officer, 7th ID, Ft Carson CO; Logistics Officer, 10th Special Forces Group (SFG) Airborne (A) and Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force (CJSOTF) Arabian Peninsula with multiple deployments in support of OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM; 240th QM BN and 49th QM Group as the BN and Group Operations Officer; Commander of a Logistics Task Force supporting a Special Operations Task Force in Iraq; Joint Special Operations Command Ft Bragg, NC serving in multiple capacities but culminating as the Military Deputy Director of Logistics while deploying to numerous countries in support of both OPERATIONs IRAQI and ENDURING FREEDOM; Commander 7th SFG (A) Group Support Battalion, Eglin AFB, FL for two years and deployed to Afghanistan twice serving as the Deputy Commanding Officer for Support of the CJSOTF Afghanistan. His most recent assignment was as the Special Operations Command Central Director of Logistics at MacDill AFB, FL.

Abstract

The relationship between US General Purpose Forces (GPF) and Special Operations Forces (SOF) has been logistically challenging since SOF's various inception dates. The GPF and SOF organizational and cultural biases severely limit the effectiveness of both organizations and ultimately limit the ability to achieve our National interests more effectively. The overall intent of this paper is to critically examine the logistical relationship between the GPF and SOF over the last decade and into the future. The paper uses a historical and doctrinal approach to argue that the relationship between GPF and SOF must be optimized in the Pre/Post-conflict phases; through logistic structure improvements; continuous Joint logistics professional development and joint professional education. The benefits of improving GPF and SOF logistics integration far outweigh the cost of continuing the negative relationship dynamics of the past. The author critically examines the relationship, responsibilities, and requirements between GPF and SOF in order to maximize global effects into the future. The underlying intent is to ensure SOF readiness through improved integration while informing Special Operations Command's (SOCOM) and GPF logistics future design strategy. The evidence presents the phenomenal level of Joint logistical integration advancements of the last decade as specifically illustrated in OPERATIONS ENDURING FREEDOM and INHERENT RESOLVE. The author highlights the potential hazards which will occur if we fail to capture the positive advancements and the implications of a reversion back to the status quo prior to 2005. The paper proposes three core recommendations which could correct and overcome the institutional and cultural friction points of the last decade. Successful implementation will greatly enhance the overall effectiveness of the US Military in achieving National objectives. The first recommendation has two subsets. The first subset is for the GPF to leverage SOF's ability to conduct Logistics Preparation of the

Environment (LPE) globally during phase 0. The second subset is to leverage SOF during the transition from Phase V back into a Phase 0 environment. The second recommendation proposes changes to both the personnel and physical supporting structure of forward-deployed logistics nodes. The third recommendation suggests changes to the Joint logistics Professional Military Education (PME) system. As a nod to our future I quote Conrad Crane when he says, “To shape security environments and prepare for a broad range of missions, ... conventional and special operations forces contribute to a global land network of relationships resulting in early warning, indigenous solutions, and informed campaigns.”¹



PREFACE

“Future operations will take place in an increasingly contested global forum, in nonpermissive, uncertain, and hostile environments, confronted by physical, cyberspace, and diplomatic restrictions. A diverse and rapidly changing operational environment with increased threats to logistics requires JFCs to deploy strong, agile, and capable military forces whose actions are synchronized with other instruments of US national power and partner nations.”²

Logisticians will have to use every means at their disposal to succeed in this environment, including overcoming the cultural and organizational bias that exists between the GPF and SOF³. Instead of fighting the relationship problem, we must redefine the problem together resulting in positive outcomes for all. We all have less money, fewer Service Members, and resources but missions continue to grow. One organization is not better than another; the only difference is capabilities and resources. No one can accomplish anything by themselves. SOF realized that with the inclusion of the 5th SOF truth, “Most special operations require non-SOF assistance.”⁴ We must learn to work smarter and synergistically to preserve our resources and provide more value to our stakeholders. Otherwise, we will pay the cost in American treasure both here at home and abroad. We must stop the cultural and resource animosity within our bureaucratic systems. Since the Goldwater–Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, we continue to debate support responsibilities required by Special Operations Forces (SOF). Regardless of the fact that those responsibilities are coded in the title 10 statute, doctrine, instructions, publications, and memorandums of agreement, we continue intentionally or unintentionally to perpetuate historical amnesia. Special Operations forces take seriously their relationship with the GPF. The value is seen in the emphasis placed by having this topic nominated as a 2016 Joint Special Operations University research topic. Likewise, the GPFs

commitment to SOF is illustrated in SOFs extensive inclusion in JP 4.0⁵, JP 3-05 CH IV⁶, and the additions of 7th Warfighting function⁷. It is common knowledge within the Joint community, that the relationship has been contentious but continuously improving since 2005 and arguably prior. Although root causes can be traced back to budgetary concerns most friction is perpetuated through the ignorance of inaccurate stereotypes and stories. Recent experiences in the 2014 CENTCOM AOR (IRAQ 2.0, Yemen, Lebanon, and Syria) have shown how far the relationships have developed. Although still far from perfect, these examples show how the paradigm has changed while positively evolving. Previously, the preponderance of conventional logistical support was to the GPF with only a small portion required to support SOF. In the CENTCOM examples, the paradigm shifted when the large GPF footprint reduced and the remaining heavy logistical structure aligned to support SOF as the primary customer. In other words, for the first time in recent history, SOF was the main effort and received the priority of logistical support. I will acknowledge that in phase V of both Iraq and Afghanistan SOF were the largest remaining forces and thus the only ones still in need of support. An evolution of this anomaly deserves further attention and is the author's pursuit. This research paper is not an exploration into all the service-specific problems between GPF and SOF, of which there are many, but an analysis of how to sustain positive joint advancements. The continuation of these relationship breakthroughs must start at the top (Joint) and permeate down to the Component level. Due to its nature, Joint Logistics have a preponderance of Army characteristics. That is not to underestimate the unique logistics capabilities of the other services. This paper will lean towards Army nuances but are illustrative of what can and must be accomplished at all levels across services regardless of the strength of organizational and cultural bias. This can be seen in the following quote from the Air War College's own Dr. Sorenson,

“The Air Force eschewed space and the Navy riverine patrol and sealift, for example, and it required either outside intervention or the role of a particularly charismatic leader to get those services to embrace such missions. Likewise, the Army refused to embrace special operations after the Kennedy administration first proposed it. Krepinevich observed that “the notion that a group of novice civilians (Kennedy, McNamara, and the Whiz Kids) should require the Army to de-emphasize its strong suits (heavy units, massed firepower, high technology) in favor of stripped-down light infantry units was bound to encounter strong resistance from the Army leadership.”⁸

INTRODUCTION

THE BOX WE CREATED: Escaping our mental prison

The relationship between US General Purpose Forces (GPF) and Special Operations Forces (SOF) has been logistically challenging since SOF’s various inception dates. The GPF and SOF organizational and cultural biases severely limit the effectiveness of both organizations and ultimately limit the ability to achieve our National interests more effectively. The overall intent of this paper is to critically examine the logistical relationship between the GPF and SOF over the last decade and into the future. The paper uses a historical and doctrinal approach to argue that the relationship between GPF and SOF must be optimized in the Pre/Post-conflict phases; through logistic structure improvements; continuous Joint logistics professional development and professional military education. The benefits of improving GPF and SOF logistics integration far outweigh the cost of continuing the negative relationship dynamics of the past. The author critically examines the relationship, the responsibilities, and the requirements between GPF and SOF in order to maximize global effects into the future. The underlying intent is to ensure SOF readiness through improved integration while informing Special Operations Command’s (SOCOM) and GPF future logistics design strategy. The evidence presents the phenomenal level of Joint logistical integration advancements of the last decade as specifically illustrated in OPERATIONS ENDURING FREEDOM and INHERENT RESOLVE. The author

highlights the potential hazards which will occur if we fail to capture the positive advancements and the implications of a reversion back to the status quo prior to 2005.

This paper proposes three core recommendations which could correct and overcome the institutional and cultural friction points of the last decade. Successful implementation will greatly enhance the overall effectiveness of the US Military. The first recommendation has two subsets. The first subset is for the GPF to leverage SOF's ability to conduct Logistics Preparation of the Environment (LPE) globally during Phase 0. The second subset is to leverage SOF during the transition from Phase V back into a Phase 0 environment. The second recommendation proposes changes to both the personnel and physical supporting forward deployed logistics structure. The third recommendation suggests changes to the Joint logistics Professional Military Education (PME) system. Before we ponder recommendations though, we must first examine the main points of the argument. This starts with GPF leveraging SOF instead of the primary negative reverse GPF perception that SOF always takes but never gives. It is time for GPF to ask SOF for specific requirements and SOF will deliver.

BEFORE AND AFTER: Leverage global expert persistent presence

Geographic Combatant Command (GCC) logisticians must think that forces are always forward deployed in their AOR because with SOF that is a truism. SOF is already regionally aligned and has extensive knowledge of the AORs.⁹ Even if a named operation is not being conducted, operations are still occurring (although not all are persistent) and they have an obligation to plan and execute logistics support for SOF. Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC) logisticians also have an imperative responsibility to stay continuously nested with the GCC. Consequently, GCC logistics planners need to use SOF to achieve GPF desired effects and

objectives. While planning for and during execution of the individual phases of a Theater Campaign Plan or Operation, GPF should leverage SOF. The lack of GPF forces on the ground and SOF's unique access, capabilities, and placement are extremely valuable. This consideration must include both SOF operators and support personnel. However for this paper, it is specifically relevant during Phase 0 and the transitions from Phase 0-I and V-0. The GPF should provide more over the horizon support to SOF in these phases so that they can in return provide Logistics Preparation of the Environment (LPE)¹⁰ to make the GPFs entry and exit more effective if and when called upon. In essence SOF logisticians should be thought of as the Advance and Trail parties for the GPF. With that thought, it is prudent for us to start with Phase 0.

During Phase 0, the GPF can leverage SOFs regional aligned forces to conduct Logistic Preparation of the Environment (LPE). In fact, SOF logisticians should be used to help the GPF logisticians train for implementation of the new GPF regional alignment concept.¹¹ This should be the beginning of a habitual partnership. SOF are normally highly engaged during phase 0. Joint logistics planners must be aware of SOF requirements during this phase. Logistics support to SOF units is the responsibility of the parent service, except where otherwise provided for by support agreements and/or directives like Base Operating Support-Integrator (BOS-I)¹². Usually but not always, there is a hybrid of organic and Service specific, joint in-theater, nonstandard, and special operations-peculiar support to SOF. "Phase 0 offers logisticians the opportunity to expand knowledge of and access to additional capabilities in anticipation of future events. If it becomes apparent that an event will occur, the logistician can begin preliminary actions, such as pre-positioning of materiel, preparing to surge capabilities, and readying the assets to move on short notice. Phase 0 is a critical period to identify potential risks in terms of access, capabilities, and capacities so alternatives and mitigating measures can be developed.¹³ Recent SOF activities

in Lebanon are a case in point. SOF, primarily Special Forces (SF) operate in Lebanon on a continuous basis through Special Operations Command Forward (SOC FWD) Lebanon. There are no GPF present, nor is the country listed on the BOS-I matrix. Prior to last year, SOC FWD Lebanon received no GPF support. The SOC FWD was not as effective as it could have been for both organizations. Since that time, Army GPF logisticians have assisted to make SOC FWD Lebanon more effective for everyone. The relationship and LPE intelligence could prove to be very valuable based on the current regional situation. The bottom line to this discussion is that the friction is a result of poor communication and understanding. SOF can do much more for the GPF, but SOF logisticians need to establish ongoing relationships. Conversely, GPF logisticians need to ask SOF to do more for them while resourcing them appropriately during phase 0 and provide specific requirements during the transition to Phase I.

The second way that SOF could be of value to GPF logisticians is during the transition from phase 0-I and the RSOI stage. During phases I and II (Deter and Seize Initiative), the focus is often on preparation for and deployment of forces, rapid expansion of theater presence through the opening of contingency bases for mission specific purposes (such as intermediate staging bases), reception, staging, onward movement, and integration. Joint logistics planners facilitate appropriate service and component logistics support to SOF elements already in theater. In these phases, a joint expeditionary capability to rapidly establish and initially operate a POD and support expanding distribution may be required to support the Combatant Commander's (CCDR's) operational requirements. Movement of materiel may have already begun and must be monitored to ensure that materiel flow is synchronized to the deployment of forces.¹⁴ Since SOF have already been operating in the environment during phase 0, SOF logisticians have an intimate knowledge of the in country logistics capabilities and facilities. SOF logisticians for

example know the APODs/SPODS, the vendors, the transportation infrastructure, Department of State personnel, Other US and Foreign IGOs and NGOs as well as the host nation logisticians. These contacts could prove invaluable for the GPF logistician to leverage and expand upon in support of RSOI activities. The GPF logisticians essentially have an ADVON force already on the ground. GPF must keep in mind that SOF requirements will also be increasing during this time. Although the SOF logisticians would be quickly overwhelmed, they could serve as the initial nucleus but would be most valuable for their knowledge. SOF has limited organic logistics capabilities that are not as robust as GPF equivalent structures. Although I specifically mention the transition in combat operations, these same functions could be leveraged during the full range of military operations and exercises. Partnership with the TSOC J4 is critical to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of GPF RSOI. The GPF should invest in this capability prior to needing it through the SOF logistics community. The same principles above can also be executed in reverse during the theater drawdown.

As proven more in Afghanistan than Iraq, the SOF GPF relationship greatly enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of the Theater drawdown or the Phase V to 0 reset. Phase V (Enable Civil Authority), often requires planning for simultaneously supporting redeployment, force regeneration, relief operations, community assistance, logistics support, and possible engagement and mentoring at governmental levels ranging from the ministerial to local civil authority. Redeployment and reset typically begins in phase IV, requiring logisticians to begin the disposition and retrograde tasks associated with force withdrawal. This includes the measured and metered drawdown of materiel and logistics capabilities no longer needed or in response to decreased operating tempo.¹⁵ As the GPF forces thin, SOF can provide retrograde coverage not only from an operations standpoint but a logistics standpoint. I will acknowledge that SOF also

had to draw down over 120 Village stability platforms in Afghanistan. However once set, SOF was able to assist by assuming security over-watch for the logisticians who were left to complete the theater drawdown. In the case of the Devil's elbow in South Western Afghanistan, GPF was having problems conducting resupply operations along the line of communication. Since GPF had been assisting SOF, SOF asked what they could do in return. GPF asked SOF to take care of the insurgents in the Devil's elbow. SOF willingly obliged and eliminated the threat. The bottom line, is that SOF can and should partner with the GPF. The transitions in Afghanistan, Iraq and as illustrated in the Devil's elbow example both show how SOF and GPF partnership can make both more effective and efficient. The key to this is relationship building and networking.

ADAPT OR PERISH¹⁶: “It takes a network to defeat support a network”¹⁷

In the book Adapt¹⁸ survival is predicated on your ability to understand your position in a complex world while conducting experimentation and continuously adapting. The GPF and the SOF logistics community will operate in the same environment with similar customer requirements which drives the need for a common situational understanding leading to synergistic opportunities. In order to accomplish this we need to: 1) reexamine the current SOF and GPF structure; 2) imagine a future SOF and GPF structure, and 3) Expand our logistics networks through regionally aligned Forward Support Centers. I concede that we will not operate in exactly the same places, but where overlap or connective tissue exists, it should be leveraged.

First, we must start by reexamining the current SOF and GPF structure. Over the last 10 years, a transformative journey occurred within the SOF logistics community. In the Army, each Group Support Battalion grew and the establishment of the Forward Support Companies was

complete. However in Naval Special Warfare (NSW) and Marine Special Operations Command (MARSOC), their logistics structures reduced significantly from a high point during the wars. AFSOC stayed relatively neutral but was always more of a maintenance focused organization. They maintain a small logistics capability that primarily relies on other SOF or GPF for their logistics requirements. SOCOM shed manpower and passed it to the TSOCs who were woefully understaffed both in terms of numbers and experience. In most cases, this increase did not go to the TSOC J4s but other staff directorates. SOF Component logistics fluctuated but remained relatively static and were always minimally staffed. To mitigate quantity and quality, SOF heavily leveraged contracted logistics solutions. In the GPF, a drastic drawdown is currently ongoing and how this will ultimately affect the Army's Active Duty logistics structure is still yet to be seen. Even in Kuwait logistics personnel staff numbers have plummeted drastically over the last 12 months. As stated previously, SOF logistics formations do not mirror GPF structure. SOF is lucky to have a few service members to cover every logistics occupational specialty. I am not arguing for an increase in SOF logistics manpower. In fact, some have argued that if the GPF accomplished support in accordance with statute there would be no need for organic SOF logistics. SOF does not need to do everything itself. In fact, it never has and never will be able to even with significant growth. Neither end of that force structure spectrum debate is feasible in today's environment. Regardless of fiscal and manpower constraints, we should be structured and operate based on optimal efficiency. It would be inefficient to develop redundant capabilities because some individuals do not like the risk that failure may pose to critical missions. That risk must be mitigated through trust, relationship building, and networking in the logistics community.

So what should the Future SOF and GPF complementing structures look like? One argument is that the GPFs need to do very little. Most of the work needs to be accomplished by SOF logisticians with GPF logistic senior leader support. Although SOF does not need increased force structure it does require positional parity. Rank has meaning for a reason within the service culture. Peers tend to interact differently than other subordinate transactions. Above the O-5 rank, Officers are much more focused on relationships fostered in order to achieve results. The number one example of this is the SOCOM J4 position. Every GPF logistics organization that the SOCOM J4 must interact with on a frequent basis is at the General/Flag Officer level. The primary examples are the GCC J4 positions. The SOCOM J4 should be elevated to a 1- Star position to match the conventional logistics structure and achieve parity. A review of subordinate SOF logistics structural positions should be accomplished as well to determine other positions requiring parity. For example, The TSOC J4s positions could easily be justified for an increase to O-6 rank. In fact, SOCAFRICA is already an O-6 and the SOCCENT J4 is scheduled to become a O-6 position next year. Not to leave out senior enlisted, these positions must be established and codified permanently in all SOF staff functions. In GPF logistics formations, Senior Enlisted are the lynchpin of networks and relationships yet SOF has very few in place. My second recommendation is to make the 528th Special Operations Support Brigade a joint force operational logistics headquarters that functions more like a Theater/ Expeditionary Sustainment Command. The assets are already in place for this reorganization to occur under SOCOM's direction. In essence, the 528th should serve as SOCOMs global logistics operational command while the J4 focuses on strategic plans and policies like other UCC J4s. Lastly under this construct, SOF must agree to use one set of Logistics automation systems that are compatible with their parent service components but provide SOF interoperability. Currently, the

challenge of working with three Service-specific systems in addition to unique SOF systems is not efficient or effective.

The GPF has announced forward postured regionally aligned efforts: “What the Pentagon has announced is a desire to create something of a hub and spoke system to integrate pre-existing bases and perhaps to build some smaller bases.”¹⁹ This is something SOF has been doing for decades and especially evident during the last two wars. SOF must continue to implement regionally aligned forward support centers. It is a priority for Special Operations Command (SOCOM) to expand their global relationships²⁰. GPF forward logistics nodes must develop a permanent relationship with SOCOM J4. Although the SOCOM J4 would serve as the primary entry point, the network should include the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) J4 and the Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC) J4s. The function of this network would be to act as a steering group by providing both organizations with a common logistics operating picture. The current transformation and reorganization is a perfect opportunity to experiment with innovation within this network. The TSOCs have the unique capability of regionally aligned logistics planning cells. SOCOM 2020 is the road map for the future of SOF operations. Inside this document, many initiatives are outlined. One such initiative is the Regional Joint Support Center initiative. This is a consolidated forward located logistics facility serving as a regional hub. GPF should integrate with SOCOM’s in this initiative to create logistics economies of scale. Currently, three locations are standing up with others to follow in accordance with SOCOM 2020. These are in addition to existing SOCOM global facilities. The same is true in reverse where GPF facilities could be shared with SOF. There exists a potential to share ownership while manning jointly. A facility could be owned by GPF but operated by SOF support personnel. A model for this is already in place with the SOF Activity Sets in Kuwait.

These Activity sets are collections of GPF and SOF equipment that is configured for combat and stored in forward warehouses. There exist myriad possibilities if we would only conduct an analysis together. This would result in an interconnected global lily-pad network of logistics nodes. As a concrete example of the revised 528th Joint SOF Sustainment Command concept above, each SOF FWD regional aligned support center could be operated by the Advanced Logistics Elements (ALE). The 0-5 led ALEs are already regionally aligned and have proven to be most valuable when forward as a conduit to GPF theater logistics structures. At a very minimum, a small group discussion between the senior SOF and GPF logisticians on the topic is required. As the next paragraph articulates, this may also close the gap in understanding.

IGNORANCE AS THE ENEMY: Excellence through understanding

There is a huge gap in understanding across the force at all ranks with regards to the responsibilities to SOF but with a specific focus on budgetary issues. These issues can be remedied through continuous Joint SOF logistics education and professional developmental assignment paths. In every Service, extreme personnel turnover occurs. This leads to a need for preparation and education that cannot occur via OJT. Turnover of staffs at critical support nodes on both sides affects support. The main way these affects are manifested between GPF logisticians who provide support to SOF is in the loss of understanding of how SOF operates. Turnover is specifically challenging at the GCC, Service Component, and FWD task force levels. The turnover results in a loss of institutional understanding (if it existed in the first place). SOF uses liaison's to conduct constant education, but the effectiveness is limited. The only way to accelerate understanding is through education. Although specific education must be conducted at the local unit level, the PME level is more effective and appropriate for general requirements.

The root documents that drive this section are the Memorandums of Agreement (MOA) between the United States Special Operations Command and the Departments of the Army²¹, Air Force²², and combined Navy.²³ These MOAs cover the following areas: personnel and manpower; training and professional military education; military construction; research, development, testing, evaluation and acquisition; administrative; logistics, and installation base support services; planning, programming, budgeting and execution; sensitive activities and programs; Army special operations forces deployment and conventional support integration; command, control, communications and intelligence support; doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership/education, personnel, facilities and proponent responsibilities. SOCOM conducts Service talks annually and these MOAs are updated periodically as required. However, most people below the Service Staffs and SOCOM are not even aware of their existence. Fiscal support requirements are the primary source of misunderstanding and require continuous education.

There is a huge gap in understanding across the force at all ranks with regards to the responsibilities to SOF but with a specific focus on budgetary issues. Again, I will first put the onus on SOF logisticians who must fully understand the topic and continuously educate our partners. One of the shortcomings of SOF logistics planners is a failure to develop budget forecasts for their forces and provide those forecasts to the GCC and their service components far enough in advance to be included in POM requests. This results in what amounts to last minute requirements that compete for allocations already committed to other conventional units. Understandable friction and frustration occurs within the GPF as they protect their resources. In the SOC FWD Lebanon case, it wasn't that the GPF didn't want to help; they were unaware and had not planned for additional resources. Once they understood the requirement, the justification

was more than adequate to garner resources that both organizations wanted and needed. The smartest way for the GCC and its components to address this is to conduct an analysis in conjunction with the TSOC J4s of annual SOF activities within the GCC. These are usually (but not always) included in the TPPs. Every year, each GCC service component should submit a budget line in their POM for support to SOF. If the full amount of these funds is not used, the delta will remain for the component/ GCC to use for other purposes. Items that should be considered and are often overlooked are Service OPFUNDS (too include Class I), automated supply and maintenance system account funding, and Service contracts that are common to anyone operating in the theater (transportation shipping and vehicles, communications cell phones, automation- initial and life cycle). All other expenses are born by the Services or components as outlined in Title 10, Department MOAs with the Services, and BOS-I. GCC logisticians must understand that SOF operates in their AOR at the behest of their commanders not the commander of SOCOM. Another example is a Joint Special Operations Air Component (JSOAC) that resides as a tenant on an FWD Airbase. In this case, the Airbase has the responsibility to provide all funding for services that are common to any other base tenants. In this case, the Air Force component must bear all title 10 requirements. This has not occurred in all cases and has been a habitual source of friction over the last decade. The JSOTF J-4 must ensure that their forces are supported by the Services/Components, as required by Title 10, USC. The JSOTF J-4 is dependent on Service and joint logistics support as the primary means of support.²⁴

One widely misunderstood aspect of SOF logistics regards SOF-peculiar requirements. "In addition to the core logistic functions, special operations-peculiar support must be considered. This support includes equipment, materials, supplies, and services required for

special operations missions for which there is no Service-common requirement. These are limited to items and services initially designed for, or used by, SOF until adopted for Service-common use by one or more Service”²⁵ SOCOM has money (MFP11) but is only to be used for these SOF -peculiar equipment, materials, supplies, and services.²⁶ It is against the law to spend MFP 11 money for MFP 2 expenses. If it is service common then a SOF unit requires, and is entitled to all the support that any other GPF element would receive. For example, there is no difference from an infantry BDE or a SOF Task Force deploying to, and operating in Lebanon. Logistics support to SOF is the responsibility of each Service’s logistics C2 structure, and this responsibility exists regardless of whether the SOF unit requiring support is assigned to the Service component, the TSOC, JSOTF, military information support operations task force, or a joint civil-military operations task force. The GCC will ensure appropriate Service logistic support is made available to the JSOTF.²⁷ BOS-I varies in by GCC, however, the doctrine states support in the following way: 1) Service specific (I.E. Army supports Army). In Libya, only Army SOF was present, therefore Army (USARAF) was responsible for the support. If the BOS-I does not designate a different Service for the country, then this requirement would continue. It is the GCCs responsibility to deconflict/ direct support relationships. You can see how complicated, just this one issue can be. It is a constant struggle to keep the revolving door of SOF logisticians educated on this topic let alone all the other constantly rotating GPF partners.

Professional Military Education (PME) initiatives are the only way to get after the SOF logistics education gap. The largest problem in SOF logistics is the education and indoctrination of new personnel. “AMATEURS TALK TRADECRAFT BUT PROFESSIONALS STUDY LOGISTICS.”²⁸ We must communicate and execute more effectively by educating and integrating our people. SOF logistics is a unique subset of military logistics. In some ways, it is a

hybrid of all the Services' logistics capabilities and procedures. It is usually a joint endeavor in unique environments. Although each Service addresses SOF education in its own way, there is no comprehensive logistics course. Additionally, a standard course taught at all levels in Service PME institutions does not exist. Local training courses have been developed within most SOF organizations to address the newcomer challenge. These courses are not standardized, continuous or mandatory. SOCOM J4 through the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) has created some courses (Operational Funding, SOCOM 101, and Non-standard logistics 201) to augment local unit training but much more must be accomplished. No SOF organization (or an organization which must support SOF) can know who will be assigned or when they will arrive. A more general large scale education approach must be developed. Curriculum must be created for a combined course to educate on a larger scale at the joint and/or Service PME institutions at all levels. A curriculum development working group led by SOCOM and in conjunction with the Service PME subject matter experts should be formed to address the challenge. Education is only one aspect of the challenge. Experience through professional development is the natural progression required to achieve a complete understanding of the SOF and GPF relationship. This leads us to the time and frequency spent in each community.

Collectively, we must review the Services' professional military development models and determine force enhancing initiatives. While serving in Combined Joint Special Operations Task Forces over the past decade, I have witnessed numerous individual GPF augmentees and SOF logisticians. I am convinced that after their service with SOF, they return to the GPF a better overall logistician. The merits of this can be argued extensively and is not the point of this paper. However, their exposure to every level of War in a JIIM environment, at least, broadens their perspective. Although exposure to SOF is a good experience, staying in SOF continuously is also

not a beneficial option for logisticians. Similarly, a logistician who conducts only one tour with SOF is not optimal for SOF. SOF desires logisticians to serve in multiple positions within SOF over time in order to have the most effect on the force. Services must accept a balance between SOF and GPF assignments over the course of a logistician's career. Assignments to SOF should be accepted as the norm similar to Services moving logisticians between heavy to light forces, surface to shore assignments, or the training to operational base. Some would argue that SOF logistics functions should be completely accomplished by GPF logistics organizations. However, a small portion must remain organic in order to act as LNOs between SOF and GPF logistics organizations. They also must provide responsive expeditionary support when conventional forces have not yet arrived in theater. When discussing professional development, one must include fellowships and other broadening education opportunities such as advance civil schooling (ACS) and training with industry (TWI). Some of the current logistics fellows, ACS, and TWI candidates should be assigned to SOF upon completion of their schooling. A specific example of this is the Central Intelligence Agency logistics fellowship. Each year, an Army O-4 logistician is chosen to work for the Agency's Directorate of Support for a period of 1 year. After this time, the Officer fills a utilization tour within the Department of Defense. Due to the nature of the agency and SOF logistics, I offer that the SOCOM J4 should be consulted on future candidates and utilization assignments. The SOCOM J4 working with or through all component staff 4s must actively manage talent with the Service personnel commands and senior GPF logisticians. The goal would be to manage personnel career paths between both GPF and SOF.

In conclusion, we can contextualize this debate in misconceptions on: purposes, sources, and levels of funding; service "rice bowls"; logistics capabilities; programing; intra/inter-service rivalries; negative cultural stereo types must be acknowledged, corrected and put in the past. We

have seen glimpses of greatness in the level of synergy and effects that could be gained by increased cooperation and integration. In fact, it is the exact prescription for what the future threat environment requires. It is not that one capability is better than another. One warfighting function alone can never win the fight. They are all needed at various times and in various combinations to have the best effects. We exist to fight the enemy, not ourselves. The biggest issue is understanding the capabilities and limitations of SOCOM and using them to the GPF's advantage. The thought has always been that SOCOM consumes resources that result in a deficiency for the GPF. That SOCOM, who already has everything, wants more, always taking and never giving. It is time for the GPF to reverse that paradigm. The question should no longer be what can the GPF do for SOCOM, but what can SOCOM do for the GPF? The overall intent of this paper was to critically examine the logistical relationship between the GPF and SOF over the last decade and into the future. The paper used a historical and doctrinal approach to argue that the relationship between GPF and SOF must be optimized in the pre/post conflict phases; through logistic structure improvements; and via continuous joint logistics education. It argued that through the elimination of GPF and SOF organizational and cultural biases we will realize an increase in the effectiveness of both organizations and ultimately in our ability to achieve our National interests more effectively. The author critically examined the relationship, responsibilities, and requirements between GPF and SOF in order to maximize global effects into the future. The paper proposed three core recommendations which could correct and overcome the institutional and cultural friction points of the last decade while providing a logistics basis to inform Special Operations Command's (SOCOM) future design strategy to ensure SOF readiness through improved integration. Leaders in SOF logistics and GPF must allocate the time to experiment, formally examine, and document our relationship. We owe it to our

logisticians, our warfighters, our Nation and ourselves to ensure that we leave bigotry and ignorance in the past. The travesty of missed opportunities to improve our effectiveness in a shifting environment is a cost we can no longer afford. We must break this cycle of animosity and division if we are to rise like the phoenix into the future of logistics. The time is now to throw away the box and rethink logistics integration between special operations and general purpose forces.



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Notes

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- ² Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Director of Logistics (J-4).. "Joint Publication 4-0 Joint Logistics." Joint Publication 4-0 Joint Logistics. 2013
- ³ Special Operations Forces (SOF)- Is the Joint term for all service component special operations elements. This includes but is not synonymous with Special Forces (SF) which is an Army element. Navy SEALs are part of Naval Special Warfare (NSW). Air Force elements are also Special Operations assigned to Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC). The Marines have Marine Special Operations Command (MARSOC). All are distinct units whose names cannot be used interchangeably. They are all SOF for example but not all are Special Forces.
- ⁴ Sean D. Naylor, "Adm Olsen Adds "Lost" 5th SOF Truth to Doctrine" <http://navyseals.com/nsw/adm-olsen-adds-lost-5th-sof-truth-doctrine/> Jan 31 2016
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- ¹⁰ Dennis Levesque, 2015, as a derivative to the term Logistics Preparation of the Theater (LPT) as outlined in JP 4.0 and ADP 4.0
- ¹¹ Army Capabilities Integration Center, Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF), <http://www.arcic.army.mil/Initiatives/regionally-aligned-forces.aspx> accessed FEB 16
- ¹² Base Operating Support-Integrator (BOS-I). When multiple Service components share a common base of operations, the JFC may choose to designate a single Service component or joint task force as the BOS-I for the location. The BOS-I facilitates unity of effort by coordinating sustainment operations at the location.
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- ¹⁶ H.G. Wells original quote, but also the Joint Special Operations command's Motto as illustrated by the coin made under ADM McRaven C 2012.
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